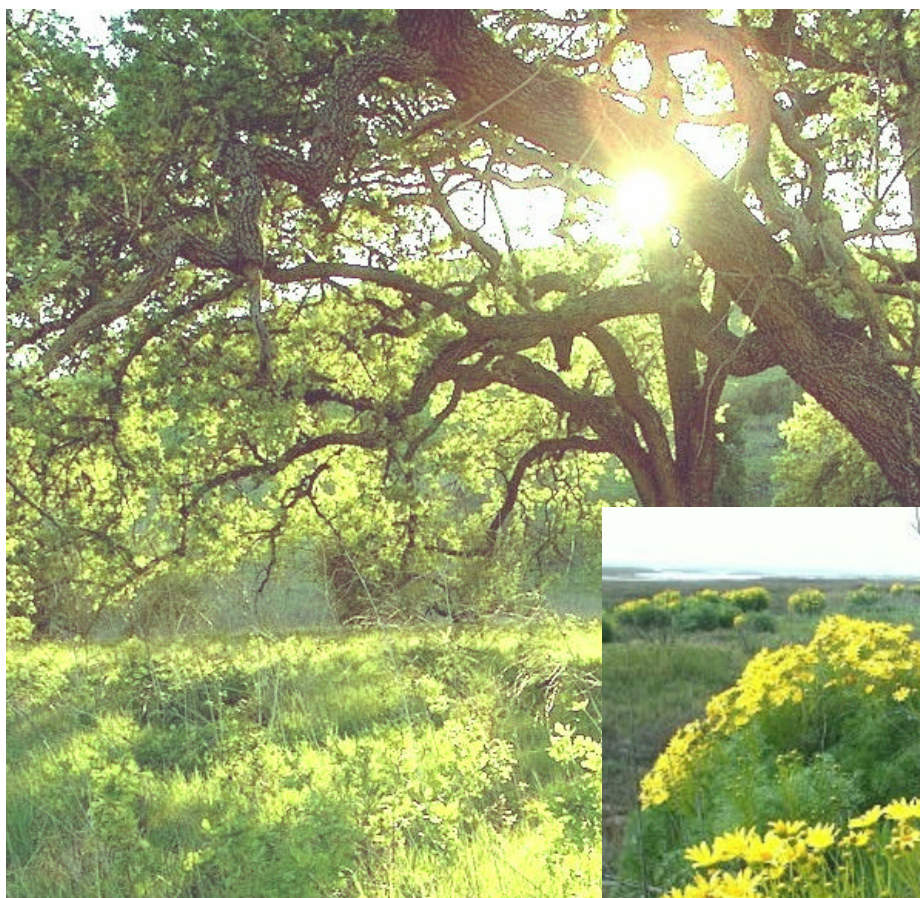




A MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER TO THE 41<sup>st</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT  
(Including Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Encino, Malibu, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Port Hueneme, South Oxnard, Santa Monica, Tarzana, Topanga, Westlake Village, and Woodland Hills.)

MARCH 2004 ISSUE

## Spring comes to the 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly District



Cheeseboro Palo Comado Canyon.  
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area  
*Los Angeles County*



Wild coreopsis in bloom.  
Ormond Beach Wetlands, Oxnard  
*Ventura County*

## New Select Committee on Alternative Fuel Vehicles

I was very pleased to be named this month by Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez as chair of a newly-created Assembly Select Committee on Hydrogen and Other Alternative Fuels.

Last month, I chaired a hearing of the Select Committee on Air and Water Quality to learn more about how the administration's plans to move forward on creation of a "hydrogen highway" for California. Although the Governor has proposed 200 hydrogen fueling and electrical generating stations along California's interstate highway system by the year 2010, there is not yet agreement on how quickly the widespread commercial use of hydrogen-powered vehicles could be expected.

It's clear to me that hydrogen and other alternative-fueled vehicles are viable options that could lower demand and the prices of imported oil. Even today, people are trading in their cars for the popular gas-electric hybrids that are increasingly being seen on our state highways. They average over 50 miles per gallon, meaning savings at the pump plus cleaner air.

We need to be careful not to over-promise what we can deliver in the next few years, but California has always been on the cutting edge of technological advances. I believe that people are ready to start taking a much harder look at alternatives such as hybrids, other clean-burning fuels, and hydrogen-powered vehicles. This is especially so when we see the periodic run-ups in gasoline prices, and also face the loss of billions of Federal transportation dollars if we don't clean up California's air.

## State Doing In-house Audit To Seek Out Efficiencies and Savings

As the state continues to grapple with the projected \$14 billion budget gap that still needs to be closed in this 2004-05 fiscal year, I often hear from constituents that we need to "cut the waste, fraud and abuse" in state government. The Assembly is taking the lead in this process, and I recently took part in the first of six fiscal oversight hearings held in the Assembly to look at efficiencies and cost savings in areas ranging from prisons to child care facilities to regional centers for the developmentally disabled and to tax credits/shelters. This is in addition to the administration's "California Performance Review," which was unveiled last month. The Governor's office describes the effort as "a rigorous examination of California state government" with the goal of formulating and recommending "practical changes to increase efficiency and effectiveness across all aspects of state government." The examination will be done by 14 teams divided up by issue area. It will be made up of approximately 150 state employees, charged with making their final recommendations back to the Governor no later than June 30, 2004. The administration, the Assembly, and state departments will be working together to, among other things, maximize draw-downs of Federal dollars, eliminate overlapping programs, and prioritize programs to lower costs. Anyone who wishes to contribute to the process can log on to [www.cpr.ca.gov](http://www.cpr.ca.gov). There is also a toll-free number where citizens can call in, which is 877-END-WASTE (877-363-9278.)

Ending "fraud and abuse" is obvious and essential. "Waste" is more subjective. Is it "wasteful" to end the hiring freeze at state agencies like the DMV to reduce long customer waits at the counter? Is it "wasteful" to add funds to the transportation budget for traffic congestion relief projects?

I very much look forward to seeing the findings and recommendations that come out of this Performance Review, and the dollar amount of savings that it estimates would be realized toward the \$14 billion shortfall. I believe that a relatively small portion of the budget deficit can be made up by this review and many very difficult choices will remain as to the cuts that will inevitably have to be made to cover a shortfall of that magnitude.



# Property Tax Deferrals Could Save Homes For Low-Income Seniors and the Disabled

I introduced AB 1886 in this session to help low-income seniors and the disabled. *The Senior and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Program* allows low-income seniors and residents with disabilities to defer ad valorem property taxes, special assessments, fees, and other charges due on a home. For claimants this year, household income may not exceed \$24,000. AB 1886 would increase the present income limit gradually over a three-year period, bringing the income limit up to \$39,000 in 2007, and indexing the income limit for inflation for all subsequent years.

*The Senior and Disabled Citizens Property Tax Postponement Program* has been in effect since 1978. However, over the past 20 years, the income threshold has not been adjusted properly to incorporate inflation or been indexed. Therefore, it was not accessible to all people that it had been intended to assist. AB 1886 will help seniors and the disabled save their homes.

When a qualified senior or disabled person is accepted into the Program, the state pays the property taxes on behalf of the applicant. Eligible homeowners must be 62 years of age or older, blind, or disabled, and must have an equity of 20% of the fair market value of the home. The applicant has no responsibility to repay the loan during his or her lifetime. During the loan period, interest is accrued based on an annual fixed rate. The loan and interest are paid back to the state upon the person's death or sale of the home.

This bill is sponsored by State Controller Steve Westly as a result of declining participation levels.

## Woodland Hills resident Jo Kitz My Selection For 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly District "Woman of the Year"



l-r: Steve Harris, Jo Kitz, Assemblymember Fran Pavley, Carolyn Atchison.

Every year, the California Legislative Women's Caucus sponsors its "Woman of the Year" celebration. Each Assemblymember selects a woman from his or her district who has contributed significantly to her community. I was proud to name Jo Kitz, Programs Director with the Mountains Restoration Trust, as my 2004 *Woman of the Year*. Jo's friends at the MRT call her "an extraordinary treasure hidden in the Santa Monica Mountains," and I agree.

She helped establish the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and made it her life-long commitment not just to preserve and protect thousands of acres of resource-rich habitat in the Santa Monica Mountains, but also to restore the majestic oak savannahs to Malibu Creek State Park. Every weekend throughout the year, you can find Jo working with her

Outward Bound group of at-risk youth and hundreds of volunteers from throughout the area planting and nurturing the next generation of oak trees in this beautiful state park. As a long-time member of the California Native Plant Society, she's also a strong advocate of native plants, and known as a committed "weed warrior."

Jo says that she has her children to thank for the direction her life has taken. "It was a shocking realization that the love of nature was not genetic when they started freaking out over creepy crawling critters in the backyard. I've just tried to live up to the code of behavior I learned as a Girl Scout – leave your site in better condition than you found it."

All honorees were recognized at a special session of the Assembly on March 15 in our beautiful state capitol building. The entire staff of the Mountains Restoration Trust flew up to Sacramento to share the day with Jo, as well as her daughter.

## E-Waste Collection Programs Coming Up

Last month, I reported on the electronic waste collection day that Ventura County held in Oak Park. The next two Household Hazardous Waste Roundups in the vicinity of the 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly District are: **April 17 and 18<sup>th</sup> at Cal State University Northridge**, and on **June 6 at the Calabasas Landfill**. For directions, times and more information, go to [www.888cleanla.com](http://www.888cleanla.com). Electronic waste, like old computers, VCRs, etc. is accepted, as well as household hazardous waste such as paint, solvents, batteries, etc.

The **City of Santa Monica** has a very extensive program for recycling and diverting waste. E-waste such as cell phones, computer equipment, TVs, vacuum cleaners, video games, etc. can be dropped off at their Transfer Station and Recycling Facility, 2401 Delaware Avenue, Monday through Saturday, between 6:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. For more information, go to [www.ci.santa-monica.ca.us/environment](http://www.ci.santa-monica.ca.us/environment). Click on Residents and Businesses.

The **City of Los Angeles** in partnership with **UCLA** has a public hazardous/e-waste drop-off site on the UCLA campus, 500 Charles Young Drive every Thursday, Friday and Saturday, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. They accept items like used motor oil, cleaning and pool chemicals, aerosol cans, computers, TVs, cellular and regular phones, etc. For more information, call 1-800-988-6942.

Every time you properly dispose of hazardous waste, you help protect our groundwater and air quality from the toxic materials that these items contain and that can contaminate our environment.

## Santa Monica Visits the State Capitol

I very much enjoy having residents from the district visit my Capitol Office.

- Earlier this month, members of the Santa Monica/Malibu PTA, parents, teachers, and high school students were in Sacramento. I think they broke the record for how many people can fit into my small office at one time, squeezing into our staff offices in mini-groups, converting our lobby into Grand Central Station, and even spilling out into the hall. Everyone was very good natured, and discussions included pending legislation, the Governor's proposed cuts to education, and their support for class size reduction programs. In the group were Jody Hasten, Elizabeth Gelfand, Lynn Leavitt, Sheila Forsander, Marianna O'Brien, Carol Davis, Patricia Nakao, Monique Normandin, Eric Reff, Maggie Casey, Celia Goetz, and Melissa Caridad.
- Also coming to the Capitol were four young people and their two directors from the Santa Monica Police Activities League. This is a citywide program for kids ages 6-17 who are enrolled in Santa Monica schools. PALs offers educational activities, cultural and athletic programs, dances, trips, family picnics, and much more. It's an innovative way for youth in the community to interact with law enforcement in a friendly and positive setting, and it was good to hear how important PALs is to them personally.



l-r: Don Condon, Christopher Tucker, Diego Godinez, Jennifer Pacheco, Mahealani Barr, Karen Humphrey.

## Oxnard City Corps Youth Are Making a Difference

This is a wonderful program developed by the City of Oxnard to provide 13-21 year old Oxnard youth with opportunities for personal growth through community service. It's linked to the high school district's work experience and exploratory program, and allows qualified young people also to earn school credits. City Corps projects include downtown cleanups, storm drain litter removal, weed abatement on city streets, water testing working with the Surfrider Foundation, and various neighborhood cleanups, among many other things.

I just recently learned about City Corps, and want to extend my personal appreciation to these young people who are working so hard on projects of real importance to both their city and to the entire region, especially for their work that is helping to protect water quality.

## Topanga Chamber of Commerce Installation

Topanga remains a resolutely unique community, including at their Chamber's annual Installation Banquet this month. Special touches included candlelight, guitar music, and wonderful healthy food. I had the privilege of installing the 2004 Board of Directors, and of swearing in 2004 Chamber President, Adam Silbar.

Two special salutes were added to the evening:

- Topanga Homegrown – Leslie Carlson, her daughter Kristen, and Jane Hoover -- was named the Topanga Chamber's **2003 Business of the Year** for their environmentally-friendly products, and community involvement with a summer theater for children, among other things.
- Liam Joyce, principal of Topanga Elementary School was named their **2003 Citizen of the Year**, with seemingly the entire Topanga faculty and staff there to celebrate his recognition. Topanga Elementary has a great science lab, visiting authors and arts programs. The tremendous community involvement makes this school one of the many jewels in the L.A. Unified School system.

I presented certificates from the California State Assembly to both Topanga Homegrown and Liam Joyce, and enjoyed the evening thoroughly.



## Palisadian-Post Names "Citizen of the Year"

**Mike Skinner**, long-time Pacific Palisades resident and youth sports coach has been named by the Palisadian-Post as their "Citizen of the Year." Post publisher, Roberta Donohue, says that "Mike began pushing for the long-needed overhaul of the playing fields in 1999, after the new gym was completed. When he realized that city funding for this project simply wasn't going to happen, he came up with a plan to have the community raise the funds and hire a private contractor to rebuild the fields in accordance with city regulations, then turn everything back over to the city."

His group raised an amazing \$950,000 for the project plus a maintenance fund. It became known as the Field of Dreams project. Congratulations to Mike Skinner on this well-deserved recognition!

## Proposition 12 Tree Planting Grants Available

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has announced the availability of the 2004-05 tree planting and three-year maintenance grant designed to increase tree canopy cover in California communities. These are voter-approved park and recreation funds, and all cities, counties, districts, and 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporations should look into the opportunity to enhance their projects with trees. Increased tree canopy is credited with improved aesthetics, recreation, energy conservation, noise reduction, wildlife habitat, and much more.

Grant applications and guidelines are available online at [www.ufe.org](http://www.ufe.org). Click on "Grant Information." **Application deadline is May 3, 2004.**



# Charitable Grants Available to Nonprofits

Capitol Network is a nonpartisan organization of legislative and administrative professionals that donates to nonprofit groups that directly provide services to women and children throughout California. Four charities will be chosen this year to receive donations of \$5,000 each. They must be nonprofit 501©(3) or 501©(6) organizations. If you know of a group that you believe qualifies, more information, plus applications, can be accessed online at [www.cacapnet.org](http://www.cacapnet.org). **Application deadline is May 3, 2004.**

## Westlake Village to be New Home of Wellness Center, Spa and Hotel

On March 12, ground was broken in Westlake Village for a state-of-the-art wellness center, medical spa, and luxury hotel. It will be set among beautifully landscaped gardens on 20 acres directly across from Dole World Headquarters. It is expected to be a major destination for people seeking day treatment, and for those who want to spend time at the five-star hotel/conference center for a total wellness experience. Governor Schwarzenegger was keynote speaker at the ceremony.



The complex will include the California Health and Longevity Institute, and a health and wellbeing center operated by WellPoint Health Network. This will be a world-class complex, and I look forward to its grand opening, which is anticipated to be in December of 2005.

## State Parks Foundation "Legacy Award 2004"



The California State Parks Foundation annually honors legislators who have supported California's magnificent state parks, and are committed to the preservation of the remarkable natural, cultural and historic resources contained in them.

This year, I was honored to receive their "*Legacy Award 2004*" at a reception held in the State Capitol in connection with their second annual State Park Advocacy Day. Last year, the recipient was our own State Senator, Sheila Kuehl. Also being honored at the reception was State Senator Tom Torlakson, and Huell Howser, host of KCET's series "California's Gold."

My family and I head straight for one of California's beautiful state parks whenever we can. Our state has an extraordinary variety of park experiences – magnificent beaches, redwood forests, oak savannahs and woodlands, alpine lakes, high and low deserts, and more. It's all right here. I'm privileged to receive this award from the people who are devoting their time and energy to be advocates for our state parks

The California State Parks Foundation is the only statewide organization dedicated to advocating for California's State Parks. Founded in 1969 by William Penn Mott, Jr., former director of the California State Park and National Park systems, the Foundation, with the support of its 40,000 members, has contributed more than \$100 million to benefit our state parks.

## LAO's Office Offers Publications On-Line

The State Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) provides nonpartisan information and analysis to the state legislature on the budget, legislation, and other matters. They also have many very reader-friendly publications available on their website at [www.lao.ca.gov](http://www.lao.ca.gov). Since the issue of increased student fees at our community colleges, and CSU and UC campuses is something I hear about frequently as a teacher/legislator, I was particularly interested in a new publication, *Higher Education: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions*. For example, do you know whether a student's tuition is kept by the college? (Yes re CSU and CI colleges. No re community colleges.)

Other LAO publications do an excellent job of summarizing (and simplifying) the state budget, report on meeting federal teacher quality requirements, and discuss aspects of health care for the aged and disabled.

## Assemblymember Pavley's Committee Assignments

Appropriations Committee  
Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media Committee  
Budget Committee  
Education Committee  
Transportation Committee  
Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee  
Select Committee on California Ports  
Select Committee on Coastal Protection  
Select Committee on the Future of California's Health  
Select Committee on National Defense, Technology and Jobs  
Select Committee on Sustainability  
Select Committee on Title IX  
Chair, Budget Subcommittee #3 on Resources  
Chair, Select Committee on Air and Water Quality  
Chair, Select Committee on Hydrogen and Other Alternative Fuels  
Legislative Advisory Committee – Wildlife Conservation Board  
Legislative Advisory Committee – California Coastal Conservancy  
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Board

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